Building Bridges
A Workshop on Collaboration Civilian - Military

For:

BUMED

By:

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Velásquez, MBA

Mauricio Velásquez is the President and CEO of The Diversity Training Group (DTG) in Herndon, VA. Mauricio serves as a diversity strategy consultant, diversity trainer, sexual harassment prevention trainer, executive coach, mentoring trainer, and expert witness (listed with TASA).

DTG's clients include small and large organizations and public and private entities. The Coast Guard, Navy – JAG and Surgeon General, NSA, TSA, USIA, NIST and other federal agencies. Mauricio has already trained for the Navy at Portsmouth, BUMED, NUWC, Justice School, all bases from Rota to Okinawa and all points in between including BUMED and Bethesda Naval Hospital.

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A Workshop on….

- Collaboration
- Respect / Professionalism
- Problem-Solving / Conflict Resolution
- Teamwork
- Holding Each Other Accountable

"We all have a shared responsibility to our shared success, to collaborate – we are in this together!" – MV

Please note: 21 participants sent me their survey responses in anticipation of this workshop – I have pulled quotes (no identities) from these interviews

Agenda / Objectives

- Opening / set up
- US Navy Mission
- Stages of Team Performance – Are we high performing?
- What is Collaboration or High Performance
  - What does it look like / not look like (from data)
- What is the greatest obstacle impeding collaboration
- Debrief Conflict Self Assessment
- What does collaboration look like
- Skills and tools we need to hold each other accountable
- Apply new skill / tool kit
- Wrap Up and Action Plan

Mauricio's Mission

- Provoke Thought
- Facilitate Discussion & Learning
- Surprise You
- Entertain You
- Add Value
- Provide Subject Matter Expertise

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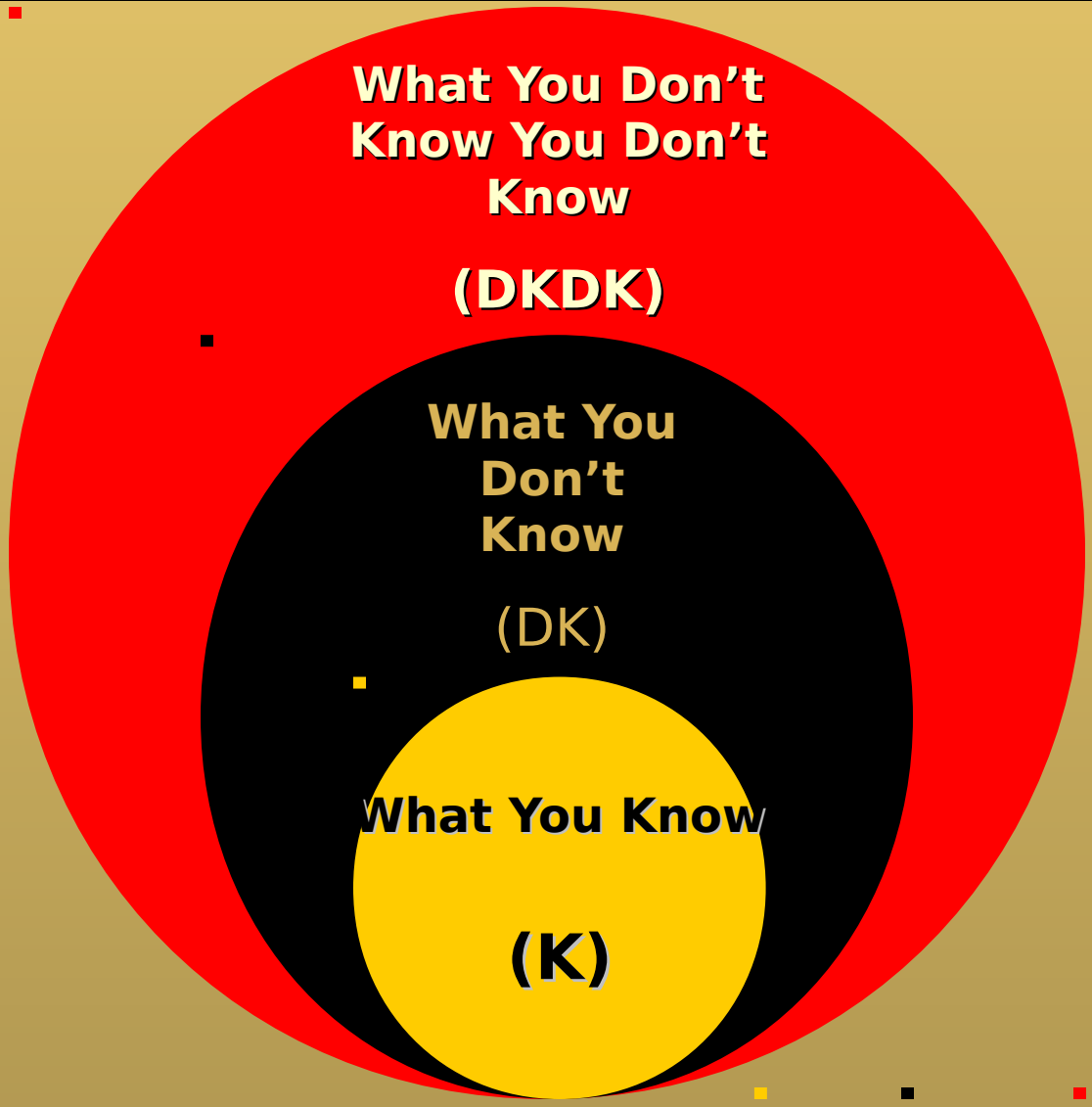
Ground Rules

Given the size of our group, it is very important that we establish and abide by a few workshop ground rules.

- **One person speaks at a time; no side conversations.**
- **Confidentiality of the person speaking is assured (what is said is more important than who said it).**
- **Everyone participates fully and there are no "wrong"questions…but remember, you have the right to pass if you feel uncomfortable.**
- **Comments and opinions of others are respected.**
- **Everyone listens actively to what others are saying and lets them finish before speaking.**
- **Ask questions to clarify when you're unsure of what someone has said or meant.**
- **Feelings are facts; acknowledge that someone else's perception is reality.**
- **DON'T BE CYNICAL – "THIS WILL NEVER WORK!"**

Opening Remark



Intent vs. Impact

Intent
(what you meant)

vs.

Impact
(what you actually said)

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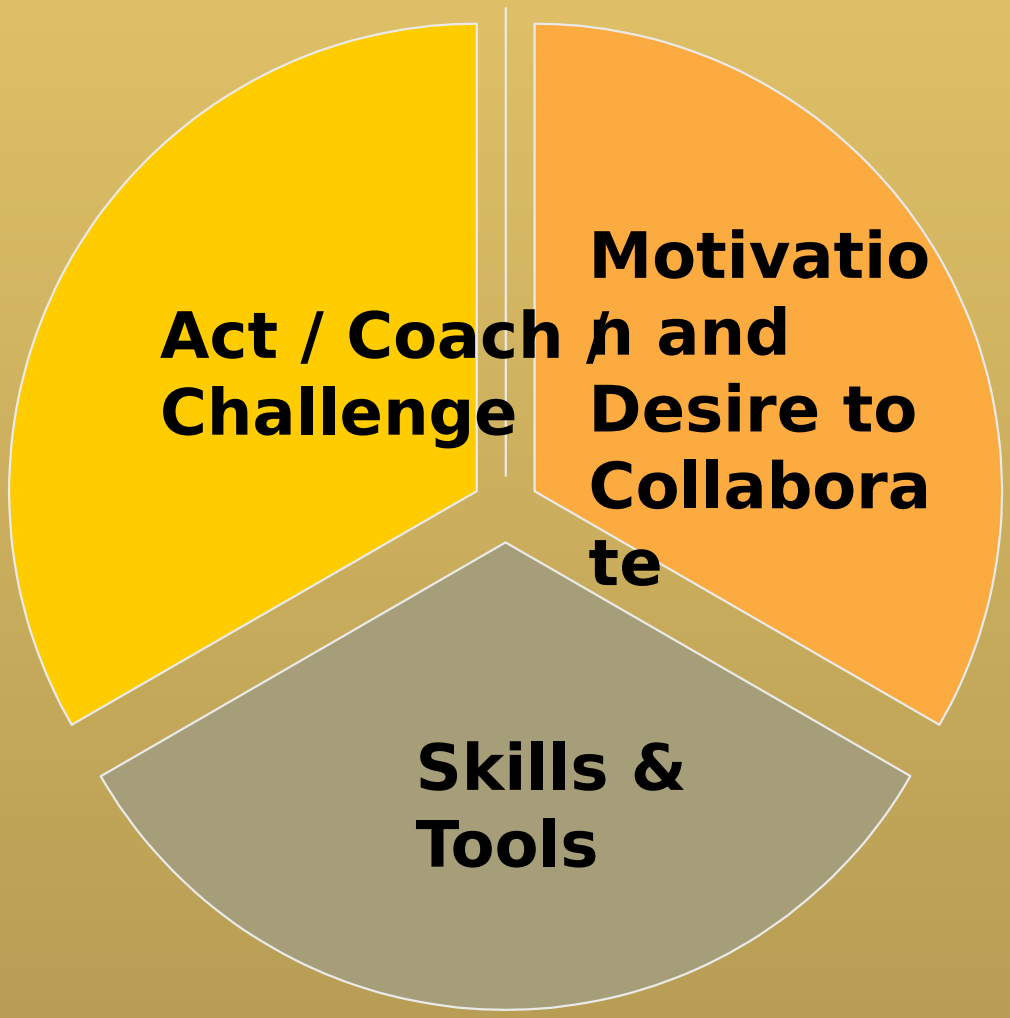
About session today



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US Navy Mission

The mission of the Navy is to maintain, train and equip combat-ready Naval forces capable of winning wars, deterring aggression and maintaining freedom of the seas.

When military and civilian counterparts do not collaborate or cooperate we don't honor our mission! We are actually undermining it.

Navy Medicine …

World Class Care …

Anytime, Anywhere …

Is this true if we are not working well together but rather sabotaging each other?

Collaboration or Sabotage?

"Military supervisor attitude towards civilians is a huge issue. Military think civilians do not deserve leave, raises, promotions etc.

I've actually been in a meeting as the only civilian present and the CAPT (06) said, 'Don't assign it to a civilian, it will never get done.' Followed by gales of laughter from all military personnel in the meeting."

What did this 06 do to this civilian?

Remember your values ….

HONOR
COURAGE
COMMITMENT

This Captain's comment ….was it….

- **Honorable or dishonorable?**
- **Courageous or cowardice?**
- **Undermining commitment?**

“I have been told ….

….by a Uniformed Officer that because I am an NSPS employee ‘that no matter what, you are not seen as important as the military personnel, no matter what the rank.’”

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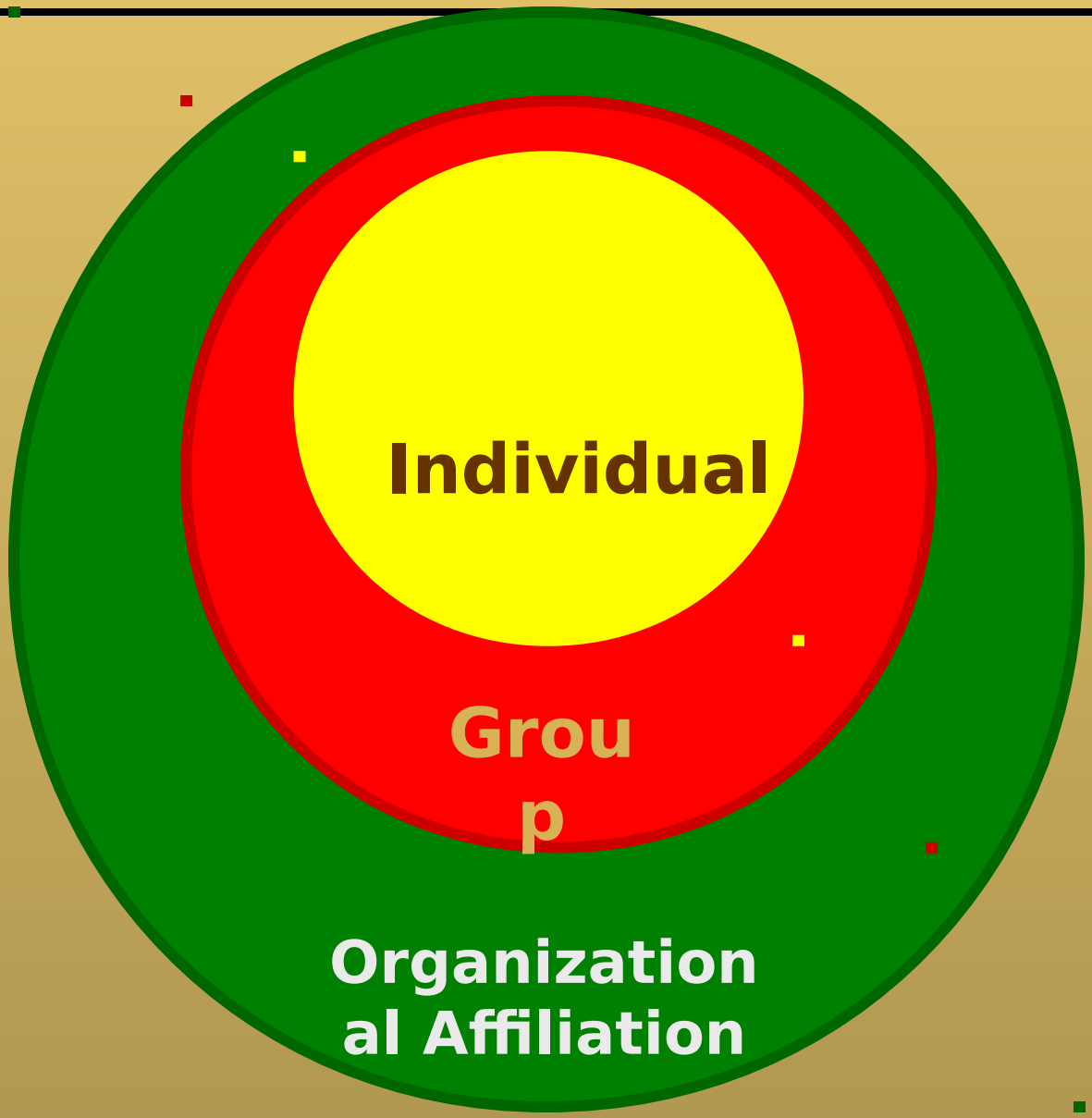
See the professional, not the group



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We are total strangers …

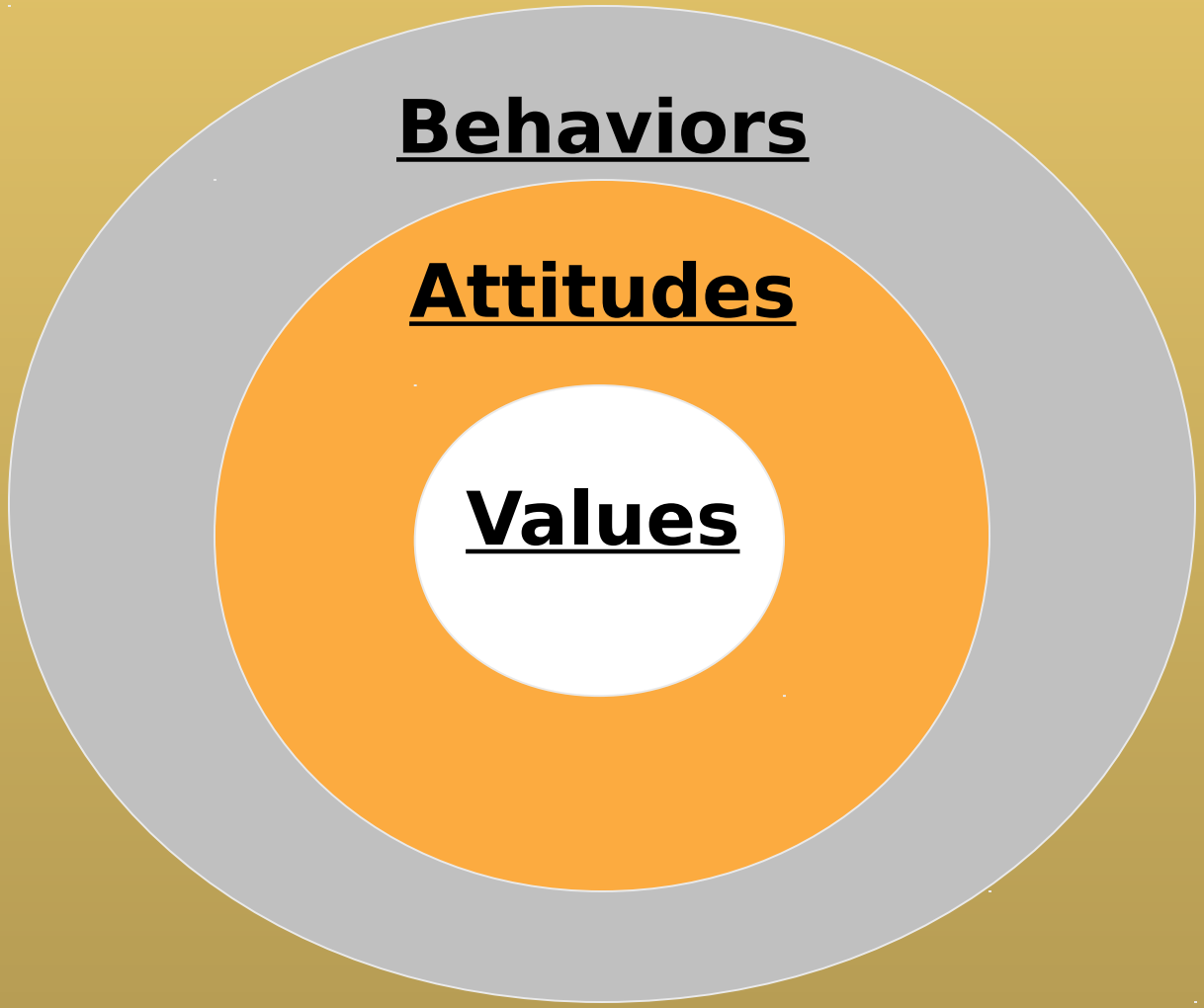
MANY COMMENTS AROUND THESE THEMES:

- **We email each other**
- **We don’t meet**
- **We never talk, we don’t build repertoire**
- **Way too many emails and way too little face time**
- **We don’t understand each other**

We have to build relationships and understanding

- "We need to understand the different cultures in which the military and civilian personnel operate. There is a different culture between Federal civilians and contractors.
- Military operate with a system of "up or out."
- The Federal civilian system is one of stability and competency and not promotion.
- Federal civilians often do not feel that they are being asked to take risks or that they will not be protected if they take a reasonable risk that proves unsuccessful."

Do you value collaboration?



Do your actions reflect this value?

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When we don't collaborate…

…. performance suffers

…. teamwork does not occur

…. conflict festers

…. trust deteriorates

5 Stages of Team Performance

- Forming - orientation
- Storming - conflict
- Norming - cohesion
- Performing - performance
- Adjourning – dissolution

In other words, unresolved and persistent conflict means we are not performing and not meeting our mission!

Five Styles for Managing Conflicts

The Turtle (Withdrawing) - Withdraw into their shells to avoid conflicts. They stay away from the issues ..

The Rhino (Forcing) – Rhinos try to overpower opponents by forcing them to accept their solution to the conflict. Their goals are highly important to them, and relationships are of minor importance.

The Teddy Bear (Smoothing) – Relationship is of great importance while their own goals are of little importance. Teddy bears wanted to be accepted and liked by others.

The Fox (Compromising) – Foxes seek a compromise: they give up part of their goals and persuade the other person in a conflict to give up part of their goals.

The Owl (Confronting) – Values own goals and relations ...

What is the greatest obstacle …

… to civilian and military personnel collaborating and cooperating?

Why do we have to have this workshop?

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From the survey data …

"Military members have a network of contacts with other military members and civilians have the same with civilian members. The two lists are rarely integrated."

"You work for a code and are encouraged to coordinate within your code. The problem is that it is not always clear who you need to coordinate with outside your code. Thus lack of coordination is not lack of effort or trust, but a lack of knowledge."

"There is a lot of arrogance here at BUMED. People think 'I am a cardiologist or a pediatrician' and they think it makes them superior to everyone else, especially the civilians. They then talk down to you or don't even bother talking to you at all. This arrogance makes for a hostile/uncooperative workplace."

2 Kinds of Behaviors

PREFERS

- **Promote respect**
- **Promote collaboration**
- **Promote teamwork**
- **Focused on performance**
- **Support Mission**

NEVERS

- **Disrespect**
- **Kills collaboration**
- **Promotes sabotage**
- **Don’t care about work**
- **Undermine Mission**

All about treatment – actions / comments

Prefers

- How can I help?
- Let's meet to talk/discuss
- How can we work this out?
- We meet more often, build repertoire

Nevers

- Not my job
- It is your fault, not mine
- Military is treated better
- Only emails – no face time
- Only responding with a sense of urgency when the request is coming from a senior member

How about these quotes?

Civilian: "That is not my JOB – I have no idea who is responsible for that."

Civilian: "It has never been done that way and it can't be done that way under any condition."

Civilian: "I don't care that you want it done that way because I will still be here after you transfer."

WOW!

Give me some more examples?

What have you heard?

Not who said what but what was said?

How you respond to these comments is more important than the actual comment?

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Some Tools

PERSON

SEPARATE

BEHAVIOR

Start Message

Start with a Positive

Please stop _____

(describe negative/unproductive behavior)

Start _____

(describe new, more appropriate/positive behavior)

Continue _____

(describe ongoing positive behavior)

End with a Positive

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I-Statement

How do I coach someone when I feel my differences are being held against me?

(Start with a Positive)

When you _____, I feel _____
(describe behavior) (impact of behavior)
I would prefer _____
(new behavior – more appropriate/productive)

OR

I feel _____, when you _____
(impact of behavior) (describe behavior)
I would prefer _____
(new behavior – more appropriate/productive)

OR

When I see _____, it makes me feel _____
(describe behavior) (impact of behavior on you/group)
I would prefer _____
(new behavior – more appropriate, more productive)

(End with a Positive)

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techniques?

How about an…..

…ouch

…wow

…with all due respect….

How about just stepping back (using body language)

Just repeat what you heard….let the person “hear what they are saying”

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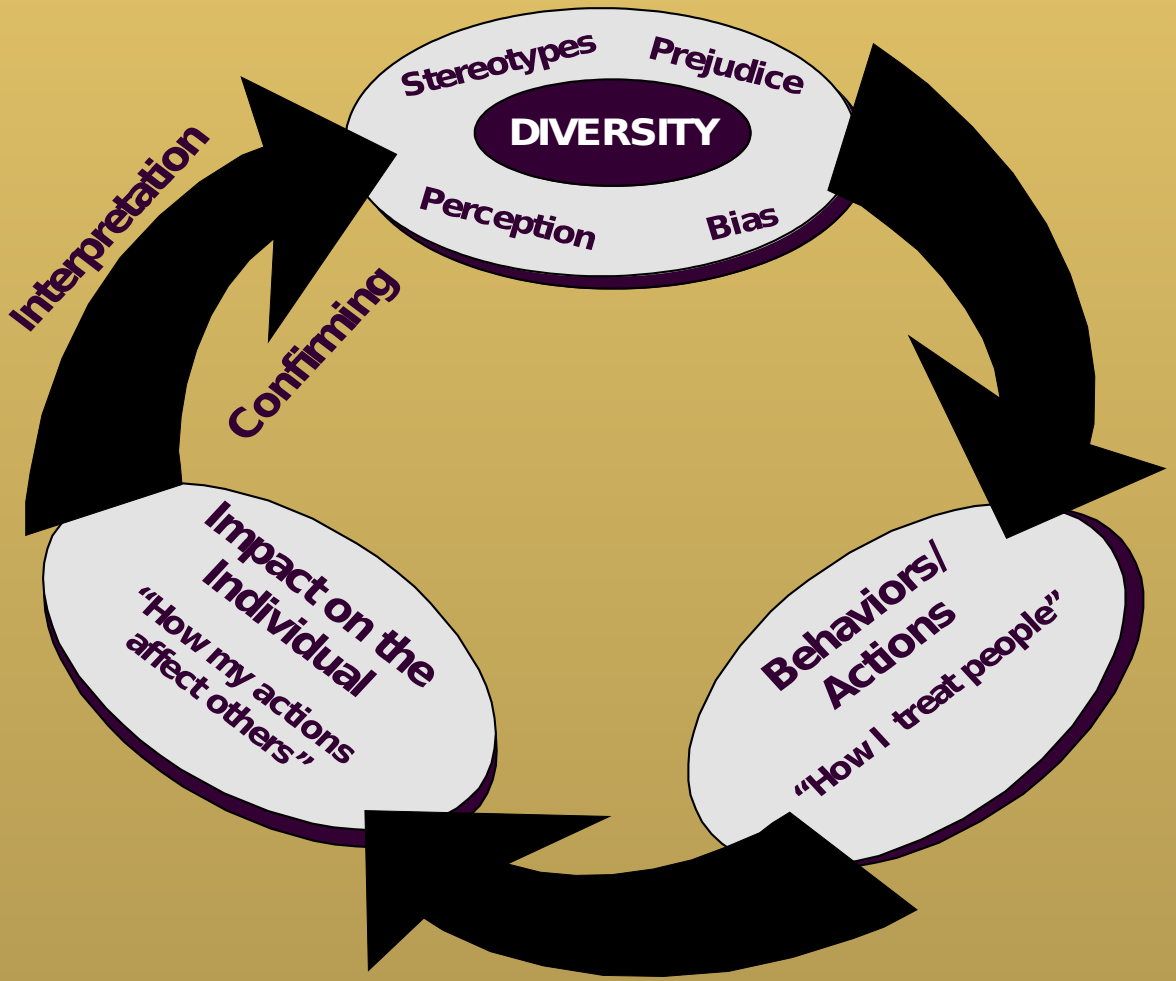
How Do We Categorize People?



OK, now let's roll up our sleeves

Here is where we have to be brutally honest with each other!

Only honesty will build trust and that is what is definitely lacking between the military and civilian counterparts!!!!

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Using Communication to Solve Problems

Step	Action	Example
Identify and agree on the problem (consensus) Ask the right questions.	• Ask for the facts • Verify the information • Decide what else you need to know	• "Help me understand exactly" • "Let me make sure this is recorded correctly" • "I will be able to help you better if I know..."
Conduct problem-cause analysis to identify a specific problem and its cause	• Restate the problem in simple terms • Get agreement on the problem and its importance/impact	• "So, the basic issue is..." • "It seems we agree it is important to fix this because..."
Identify solutions/alternatives	• Ask what can be done to solve the problem • Suggest other options for consideration • Tell them what you can do	• "What ideas do you have on how this can be fixed?" • "In similar situations we have.." • "I really wish we could do exactly what you

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Using Communication to Solve Problems

Step	Action	Example
Implement solutions/take action with the help of the customer	• Ask for their cooperation • Tell them what you will do • Suggest how they can help, now and the next time	• "I'll need your help to…" • "Here is what I can do…" • "To get this resolved quickly, I'll need you to…, and if this should happen again, please…"
End with an agreement and a thank you. Monitor and follow up on the situation	• Summarize what will be done, and by whom • Thank the customer for cooperation and help • Promise to follow up to ensure the solution really worked	• "Can I assume that we agree on…?" • "Thank you for being so cooperative in helping us to solve this problem." • "I will call you in a week to be sure the situation is resolved."

Problem Solving

- What is the #1 biggest issue / problem /obstacle?
- What is the root cause(s) behind this issue?
- What can BUMED do about it? Present solutions /options / choices in order of what you would try first!

We need an oath

OATH

I will always keep our mission first and foremost in my mind

I will see my colleagues and peers as just that – professionals with experience

I will not see “military” or “civilian” first

I will assume good intent and give my colleagues the benefit of the doubt

I will speak up when I don’t see the above happening or occurring

Please sign:

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Action Plan

- How can I create a more collaboritive work environment?
- How can I make what I learned today “stick” in my role at BUMED?
- How will we know we are getting better? (destination and metric)

When I see …

People using the plan of the week.

The JO icebreaker used more often in more places.

When we appoint civilians to leadership positions as supervisors.

Civilians don’t serve on military ranking boards so why should military serve on the Pay Pool Panel.

When we recognize civilians as well as military.

More professional treatment in the hallway – would a smile or greeting in the hallway kill you?

More communication, more meetings, more recognition and keep building these brides.

A discussion and understanding of the different rules – civilian only and military only.

When I see …

- More social activities where military and civilian mix and mingle and leadership is present – shows up.
- BUMED conference where all the codes present what important things they are working on that could help.
- When people are voluntarily reaching out to others and actually listening to one another.
- Stop looking for blame – take responsibility.
- We need less jumping to conclusions and fewer assumptions about what others think or how they feel about various issues.
- Encouraging civilian employees to give a current cv / resume and having the military supervisors go over the cv / resume with the civilian. Get a sense of the whole person.

In Closing….

“I have found that on a peer and subordinate level, if I have made an effort to get to know people and treat them courteously, I have little trouble in gaining cooperation. Lack of planning on my part doesn’t constitute an emergency on your part. Plan ahead so not to put fellow employees in “I need it now” situation.

For more information…

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